

Making the Most of God's Gifts

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1

**Lesson 12****Focus:**

Make the most of
God's gifts.

Lesson 12**Bible Basis:**

Matthew 25:14-30

Lesson 12**Memory Verse:**

Each of you should use whatever
gift you have received to serve
others, as faithful stewards of God's
grace in its various forms.

—1 Peter 4:10

Students will use limited resources to make a paper chain and begin thinking about how to make the most of what God has given them.

Materials:

- Paper (1 sheet per 4-5 students)
- Tape (1 roll per 4-5 students)
- Scissors (1 pair per 4-5 students)

If your class is meeting online, consider doing the activity as a brief example to demonstrate the paper chain you can make with one sheet of paper.

Welcome your students as they enter. As everyone settles in, let everyone discuss what they're good at. It can be hard to identify what you're good at when you're a middle schooler, so encourage students to help each other identify things they're good at. Encourage a mix of skills (playing basketball, math, playing an instrument, etc.) and attributes (kindness, patience, helping, etc.)

Those things that we're good at are gifts from God. Sometimes it feels like we have a lot, sometimes it feels like we don't have much. It can be easy to avoid using our gifts if we don't feel like they're as good as or as much as the gifts of others. Here is a challenge for you. Let's see what we can do with limited resources.

Divide the class into groups of 4-5. Give each group **ONLY** one sheet of paper, one roll of tape, and one pair of scissors. Instruct the groups to make the longest paper chain they can with their given resources. The students may balk at the idea of making a long paper chain with only one sheet of paper, but just encourage them to do their best. Give the groups a time limit (5 minutes). When they're finished, compare the paper chains. Celebrate the winners and gather as a whole group again.

➤ **What were some of the challenges of this activity?** (We only had one sheet of paper, we had a short time, we struggled with teamwork, etc.)

➤ Ask the winning team... **What made your paper chain so successful?** (We had a good strategy, we worked together well, we did our best with what we had, etc.)

➤ Ask the non-winning teams... **What would have made your paper chain better?** (More paper or tape, better teamwork, more time, better strategy, etc.)

➤ **Of the things that could have made your paper chains better, which ones do you have control over?** (Working together as a team, my attitude, my own contribution, etc.)

Sometimes, it feels like we don't have enough gifts, abilities, or resources to do what is asked of us. Today, we're going to look at what Jesus said to do in a situation just like that.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

Making the Most of God's Gifts

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STEP 4 

Lesson 12**Focus:**

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—1 Peter 4:10

Materials:

- Internet access
- Whiteboard and markers (or screenshared document)
- Index cards
- Pens/pencils

If your class is meeting online, invite students to bring index cards and pens/pencils to class.

Ask a volunteer to read today's memory verse (1 Peter 4:10). Ask students to pair up and re-state the verse in their own words. Come back together as a whole group and ask for volunteers to share what they came up with.

Basically, what it comes down to is that each of us is responsible to use whatever God gives us. Nothing more, nothing less. We're going to watch two videos, back to back, of people using their gifts and then we'll discuss them.

In the first clip, we'll see Microsoft founder Bill Gates pledge to give his remaining fortune to the Bill Gates Foundation, which will use that money for charitable causes. Bill Gates's net worth is currently \$105 billion.

Show the following video to your students [0:19]:

Bill Gates pledges remaining fortune to the Gates Foundation, which will close in 20 years

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/KbHdE4WFYIo>

Now show this video to your students [2:06]:

Restaurant employees' act of kindness goes viral

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdji-CVr79c>

➤ **What was similar about the people from these different videos using their gifts?** (They are trying to make the world a better place, they're using what they have, etc.)

➤ **What was different about the way these people are using their gifts?** (Bill Gates is giving away lots of money because he has a lot to give. The owners of Golden Rule Barbecue do not have billions of dollars, but they gave money for a tire as well as kindness. The Gates Foundation gets national attention all the time, whereas small business owners giving a tire and kindness is more unnoticed, etc.)

➤ **If you stuck these people into our parable from today, what do you think the master would have to say to them?** (Answers could vary. They both are using what they have; they would both be appreciated.)

Both Bill Gates and the people of Golden Rule Barbecue are using what they have. The owners of Golden Rule gave kindness and a tire to help this family, whereas The Gates Foundation focuses on donating to charities. God gives all of us gifts and asks us to use them. What gifts do you have that you can use?

As a group, brainstorm gifts that middle schoolers might have and ways they could use them; write students' ideas on the whiteboard (or screenshared document) as they give them. Then, distribute supplies (or invite students to have them ready at home). Ask each student to write down one gift they have on one side of the card and one way they plan to use it this week on the other side. Gather back together as a group and ask each student to share what they've written.

End by praying together. Thank God for the gifts each of you have been given and ask for God's help in making the most of what He's given you.

Additional Source: <https://www.forbes.com/profile/bill-gates/>

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